

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6953

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES REMAINING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

REF: SECSTATE 216690; HK10715

1. IN RESPONSE TO REFTTEL, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE WELL FIRST TO SUM UP BRIEFLY THE SITUATION IN HONG KONG AS IT HAS DEVELOPED SINCE APRIL. A TOTAL OF 3,909 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WERE ACCEPTED BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND PUT INTO IMMIGRATION DETENTION CAMPS. PRESSING VIGOROUSLY FOR THIRD-COUNTRIES ACCEPTANCE OF THESE REFUGEES, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, WORKING IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH BOTH ICEM AND THE UNHCR, HAS MANAGED TO HAVE 1,045 ACCEPTED INTO THEN COUNTRIES BESIDES THE US AS WELL AS PERMITTING 103 OTHERS ALL ETHNIC CHINESE TO SETTLE INTO THE ALREADY OVER-CROWDED LOCAL COMMUNITY. AT PRESENT, THERE REMAIN 1,716 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HONG KONG.

2. OF THE 1,300 QUOTA PROVIDED BY THE CONGEN BY ITAF FOR MOVEMENT TO THE U.S. 932 HAVE ALREADY DEPARTED FOR THE U.S. 170 WILL LEAVE ON SEPTEMBER 16, AND 196 OTHERS HAVE BEEN CLEARED AND ARE AWAITING ICEM TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS. THIS EFFECTIVELY USED UP OUR CURRENT QUOTA AND WE HAVE AN ADDITIONAL 711, 41 OF WHOM ARE NOT PRESENTLY IN CAMPS, AWAITING VISAS FALCON CLEARANCES WHO APPEAR TO MEET THE CURRENT CRITERIA. ADDITIONALLY, APPROXIMATELY

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300 REFUGEES HAVE SUBMITTED CLAIMS TO THE CONGEN CONCERN-

ING THEIR ELIGIBILITY BUT AS YET WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO EVALUATE THESE CLAIMS. THE MOVEMENT OF THOSE ALREADY INCLUDED WITHIN OUR CURRENT QUOTA AND WAITING ICEM TRANSPORTATION TO THE U.S. WILL BRING THE CAMP POPULATION DOWN TO 1,350 AND THE SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENT OF THE 711 (MINUS THE 41 WHO ARE NOT IN CAMPS) QUALIFIED PLUS HALF OF THE 300 WHO ARE SUBMITTING CLAIMS, WOULD LEAVE 530 IN HONG KONG GOVERNMENT CAMPS. THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES AT THE MOMENT CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF 90 ADDITIONAL REFUGEES BEING ACCEPTED BY AUSTRIA, PERHAPS 50 TO 150, LARGELY SINGLE MEN WHO SERVED WITH FRENCH ARMED IN THE PAST, BEING ACCEPTED BY FRANCE; BELGIUM MAY TAKE 7; ITALY IS CONSIDERING ABOUT 25. BEYOND THIS THERE IS LITTLE HOPE FOR ADDITIONAL THIRD COUNTRY RESETTLEMENT. THUS AT THE MOMENT IT WOULD APPEAR THAT SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 300 AND 400 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WILL REMAIN IN HONG KONG IF ALL OF OUR QUOTA NUMBERS AND ADDITIONAL PENDING CASES MEETING CURRENT CRITERIA ARE ACCEPTED BY ITAF.

3. WE HAVE NOT YET MADE ANY SURVEY OF THIS GROUP OF 300 400 BUT WE BELIEVE THAT MANY WOULD FALL INTO THE CATEGORY OF PERSONS HAVING EXTENDED FAMILY RELATIVES AMONG THE REFUGEES ALREADY ADMITTED INTO THE US (UNCLES, NEPHEWS AND THE LIKE). THOSE WHO DO NOT ARE PRIMARILY EX-ARVN, MOST OF WHOM HAVE HAD CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE PAST AND WHO ARE CERTAINLY INCLUDED IN THE HIGH-RISK CATEGORY.

4. GIVEN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S TREMENDOUS PERFORMANCE IN ENCOURAGING THIRD COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT SOME 30 PERCENT OF THE REFUGEES HERE, AND THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN ACCEPTING VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WHILE RETURNING CHINESE ILLEGAL REFUGEES TO CHINA, WE WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT THE ADDITIONAL HONG KONG QUOTA FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WOULD BE 1,100 TO 1,200 THEREBY PERMITTING ACCEPTANCE OF THE PENDING 711 MEETING CURRENT CRITERIA AS WELL AS THE BUILD OF THE 300-400 WHO WOULD BE LEFT IN HONG KONG IF ALL THE AVENUES FOR RESETTLEMENT CURRENTLY ENVISAGED BY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT DO EVENTUATE. WE WISH TO MAKE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT WE WILL NEED AT ONCE THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF SAY 800 ON THIS ADDITIONAL QUOTA. IF WE DO NOT GET THIS INSTALLMENT, ICEM WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ARRANGE TRANSPORTATION AND THE FLOW OF PRIORITIES I AND II ELIGIBLES FROM HONG KONG WILL BE STOPPED.
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